Deforestation in North Eastern States

[English]

705. SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI
DR. S.P. YADAV

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether forest area in a number of North-Eastern States has been decreasing drastically;

(b) if so, the percentage of the forest area in these States decreased during the last decade;

(c) the reasons for decreasing of forests in the region; and

(d) the plan, if any, that has been formulated by the Government to check the decrease in forest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (c). According to the assessment made by the Forest Survey of India based on the visual interpretation of satellite imageries pertaining to the periods 1981-83 and 1985-87, a decrease in actual forest cover has been indicated in the following states mainly due to shifting cultivation and unregulated felling:

Assam	1.2%
Meghalaya	4.97%
Mizoram	4.78%
Tripura	7.2%

(d) The Government have taken following steps to check it:

(1) Afforestation programmes have been launched under the 20 Point Programme;

(2) Guidelines have been issued to prepare Working Plans for all the forest areas;

(3) As per available information, under the centrally sponsored scheme relating to shifting cultivation, 26,582 families have been selected for rehabilitation in nine states, for which, a total outlay of Rs. 174 crores is envisaged. During the four years, 1987-88 to 1990-91 a sum of Rs. 50.91 crores has been released as a Central Assistance to the nine states for implementation of this scheme.

National Committee on Tourism

706. SHRI R. SURENDER REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether any study report regarding promotion of international tourism in the country has been submitted to the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government on the recommendations made thereon with details of package of incentives recommended by the National Committee on tourism?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). The recommendation relate to a package of incentives for attracting

private investment in the tourism sector, reorganisation of the Ministry of Tourism and India Tourism Development Corporation and a strategy for manpower development in the tourism sector. These recommendations have been considered by the Government and implemented to the extent feasible. The package of incentives recommended by the Committee included enhancement of interest subsidy to hotel projects, institutional loans, income tax concessions, reduction in custom duty, etc.

Inclusion of Insurance in Rail Fare

707. SHRI KARIYA MUNDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to include Insurance in fare of all passengers travelling in the Railways as is being done in air tickets keeping in view of the rising rail accidents;

(b) if so, whether the amount of compensation to the victims of railway accidents will be enhanced accordingly; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Sale of Westland Helicopters

708. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Britain have begun talks for the sale of the Westland helicopters lying idle at present; and

(b) if so, the details of the progress made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Notice of Agitation by Teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas

709. SHRI MUHIRAM SAIKIA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that All India Kendriya Vidyalaya Teachers have given notice of a phased agitation to be launched from November 18, 1991;

(b) if so, the details of their demands;

(c) whether any attempt has been made by the Government to negotiate with them;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) The All India Kendriya Vidyalaya Teachers Association had announced such an agitation earlier but have called it off following their meeting with the Minister of Human Resource Development.

(b) The AIKVTA has at different times made various demands which includes/ implementation of recommendations of Chattopadhaya Commission, representation of teachers on Sangathan and its Board of Governors, increase in promotion quota and promotional avenues for miscellaneous category of teachers, selection grade after eight years, rationalisation of JCM, recruitment and promotion rules and transfer policy, introduction of new subject, house for every teacher, reduction of work load on teachers,